



Friday, 20 Jan 2012



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Kirkwood United Church of Christ



In starting Kirkwood UCC Rev. Susannah Davis took a leap of faith. As a successful and highly respected UMC pastor known for her talent in revitalizing churches, Rev. Davis had enjoyed years of serving in fulfilling, transformational ministries in the Atlanta area. Rev. Davis heard God calling her to a new adventure in church planting. If this were not enough, she then learned of "this crazy, amazing church" called the United Church of Christ. A vision was born.

Rev. Davis met with Rev. Dr. Timothy Downs, Conference Minister, and Rev. Cameron Trimble, former Associate Conference Minister for Church Development, in the Southeast Conference office and told them that she had a dream of starting a church in Kirkwood, GA. She wanted this church to be deeply steeped in the values and identity of the United Church of Christ, a church which she understood to be committed to social justice, equality and radical hospitality. "Kirkwood needs the United Church of Christ, and the United Church of Christ needs the people of Kirkwood," said Rev. Davis.

The church would start out of a coffee shop she bought located in the heart of old, historic Kirkwood, just outside of the city of Atlanta. The coffee shop provides a natural connection to the community and a place to gather for worship, bible study and community activities. The coffee shop, named Gathering Grounds, would become the hub of the Kirkwood community, and Kirkwood United Church of Christ would be an extension of this gathering. Talk about an exciting vision!



After completing extensive assessments and receiving the blessing of the SEC Board of Directors, Kirkwood United Church of Christ was born. Susannah had over 50 people in her first worship service, and participation has remained strong since then. This new church community has contributed in building Habitat houses, held Easter sunrise services and egg hunts in a local park and hosted a booth at the annual Kirkwood community festival. Rev. Davis says, "I know that I have been called to serve, and I know that God expects me to be authentic, to be the person that God has created me to be. I believe that in and through the faithful denomination of the United Church of Christ, God is making a way. That is who God is. God is always making a way for us to draw closer, to share compassion and love with our sisters and brothers."

Kirkwood United Church of Christ is making a way for many people in Kirkwood to connect to our God of radical welcome. If you would like to learn more about Kirkwood UCC or contact Rev. Susannah Davis, go to <http://www.kirkwooducc.com>.

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